



BEST RESTAURANT

1. **Belly** 30 E. Broadway. 683-5896. eatbelly.com.
2. **Izakaya Meiji** 345 Van Buren St. 505-8804. izakayameiji.com.
3. **Marché** 296 E. 5th Ave. #226. 342-3612. marcherestaurant.com.

Will someone please give Brendan Mahaney a key to the city, already? As founder and executive chef of Belly, Mahaney has become a Eugene institution, serving up a creative but consistent, amazing but affordable blend of American and European rustic farmhouse cuisine with a distinctly Southern soul twist. Belly's offerings — from the pork confit to the bacon-wrapped, manchego-stuffed dates to the oxtail and shitake empanadas — walk that delectable line between gastronomic adventure and foodie comfort. And despite the restaurant's success, Mahaney is not one to rest on his laurels; he relocated a couple years back to bigger digs downtown, turned the original 5th Street location into a taqueria, then had to move Taco Belly to a bigger space. That closed and he moved Belly Taqueria to Willamette Street, with Belly taking up residence on Broadway. "It's a great big canvas," Mahaney says of the restaurant's menu. "Every week there's something that's added or tweaked. There's a nice organic feel to that. It's evolved."

THE STAFF AT BELLY GET THEIR YOGA ON

PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA

BEST FOOD CART

1. **Sammitich** sammitichtime.com.
2. **Delacata** delacata.blogspot.com.
3. **Da Nang Vietnamese Eatery** danangeatery.com.

All hail the Sammitich. With splashy rainbow colors and a whimsical attitude, the Sammitich trucks are instantly recognizable all across town, not just for the great grub but also for a quirky delivery style that's just about perfect for Eugene. "Off the wall isn't exactly right because there's already an Off the Waffle," Sammitich owner KC Brooks jokes as he tries to describe the appeal of his food cart. "One of my favorite quotes from a business I admire, Dogfish Ales, is that it's 'off-centered ales for off-centered people.' I have a really strange way of delivering food, and it's capturing the imagination of a lot of people." Brooks says that the design on his first food truck was drawn by one of his friends, Harlequin, when she was 16. He bought her design when she was 21, but he says he loves the youthful feel of the artwork. "It's so awesome and pure, no subliminal messages, just drawn because she thought it was pretty," he says. Brooks is implementing a "Sammitich of the Month" program, so be on the lookout for the Thanksgiving-friendly "Turkey Gobbler," with ground turkey, dried cranberries and Stove Top stuffing.

BEST COMFORT FOOD

1. **Papa's Soul Food Kitchen** 400 Blair Blvd. 342-7500.
2. **Cornbread Café** 1290 W. 7th Ave. 505-9175. cornbreadcafe.com.
3. **Turtle's** 2690 Willamette St. 465-9038. turtlesbarandgrill.com.

BEST VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN FOOD

1. **Cornbread Café** 1290 W. 7th Ave. 505-9175. cornbreadcafe.com.
2. **Laughing Planet** 760 Blair Blvd., 868-0668; 2864 Willamette St., 505-5399. laughingplanetcafe.com.
3. **Morning Glory Café** 450 Willamette St. 687-0709. morninggloryeugene.com.

When it comes to Cornbread Café, we're not even talking about the best vegan food in Eugene. Nope, this joint has got to be one of the best places (and one of the most unique!) to get Southern-inspired comfort food in the entire country, using 90 percent organic ingredients. Just ask Guy Fieri and the *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* team: Cornbread Café will be the first ever vegan restaurant featured on the famous Food Network show. The episode features a Cornbread signature: the Eugenewich, a vegan variation of Carl's Jr.'s Western Bacon Cheeseburger. Ingredients include a southern-fried Surata tofu patty topped with melted Daiya cheddar, deep-fried carrot slices and hand-breaded onion rings. "I made it my goal to be on that show," says owner Sheree Walters. "It was a very surreal experience." Situated in an old diner on 7th and Polk that was built in the 1940s, Walters says that Cornbread Café has been a natural fit for Eugene since first opening its doors.

BEST CHEAP EATS

1. **Burrito Boy** 2511 W. 11th Ave., 338-4219; 510 E. Broadway, 344-8070; 943 River Rd., 689-7970; 30 W. 10th Ave., 344-5856; 1071 Valley River Dr., 343-8089. burritoboy.com.
2. **Laughing Planet** 760 Blair Blvd., 868-0668; 2864

Willamette St., 505-5399. laughingplanetcafe.com.
 3. **Café Yumm!** 730 E. Broadway, 344-9866; 1801 Willamette St., 686-9866; 130 Oakway Center, 465-9866. cafeyumm.com.

BEST PLACE TO EAT WITH KIDS

1. **Laughing Planet** 760 Blair Blvd., 868-0668; 2864 Willamette St., 505-5399. laughingplanetcafe.com.
2. **Papa's Pizza** 1700 W. 11th Ave., 485-5555; 1577 Coburg Rd., 686-2240. papaspizza.net.
3. **Turtle's** 2690 Willamette St. 465-9038. turtlesbarandgrill.com.

BEST INDIE BOOKSTORE

1. **Smith Family Bookstore** 525 Willamette St., 343-4717; 768 E. 13th Ave., 345-1651. smithfamilybookstore.com.
2. **Tsunami Books** 2585 Willamette St. 345-8986.
3. **J. Michaels Books** 160 E. Broadway. 342-2002.

Smith Family Book Store has become an undeniable staple of the Eugene book-loving community. The business, which is family-owned and operated, has been selling and buying books for roughly 30 years. The comfortable clutter of the store is immediately compensated for by a large, engaging collection of books, ranging from textbooks to more than 500 sections and subsections. And don't worry: It's all labeled and organized alphabetically. Smith offers reasonable prices, and philosophically, the store epitomizes the open-minded Eugene community.